

(TMI Newsletter – August 2014)

DR. LARRY BURK: INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE



Larry Burk, MD, CEHP, is an integrative physician and musculoskeletal radiologist, trained in hypnosis, acupuncture, and the Emotional Freedom Techniques (EFT). He was co-founder of Duke Integrative Medicine, a founding board member of the American Board of Scientific Medical Intuition and former board president of the Rhine Research Center. He is author of Let Magic Happen: Adventures in Healing with a Holistic Radiologist. His many articles, video blogs and newsletters can be found on [his Website](#).

Q: You are a certified Medical Doctor.

A: Yes in my hometown at the University of Pittsburgh is where I did my medical school and radiology residency training.

Q: How did you go from that to teaching at The Monroe Institute— *Medical Intuition and Symbolic Diseases* program?

A: Well, after this very conventional beginning, I was unexpectedly launched into a multifaceted adventure into holistic healing in 1987. It was prompted by a perfect storm of events including my father being diagnosed with metastatic renal cancer, discovering my first metaphysical bookstore, and joining the national MRI safety committee to address concerns about claustrophobic patients and the health effects of electromagnetic fields. The safety issues led me to become interested in hypnosis and acupuncture, taking my first hypnosis training in 1990 while beginning to explore alternative cancer therapies for my dad, including acupuncture.

Q: OK where did that lead?

A: The next stop on the journey was private practice in Virginia Beach where I was introduced to the Edgar Cayce material and medical intuition. Experiences with a number of talented intuitives caused a significant paradigm shift in my worldview, and in 1993 I moved to Durham, North Carolina, home of my alma mater, Duke University, and the Rhine Research Center, formerly the Duke Parapsychology Laboratory. I took a job as section head of musculoskeletal radiology at Duke and also pursued parapsychology research in intuitive diagnosis, eventually becoming a founding member of the American Board of Scientific Medical Intuition and Rhine board president for a year.

Q: So at Duke was it difficult to follow this alternative medical path?

A: No, surprisingly not. Upon arriving at Duke I discovered a number of like-minded colleagues and started the Mind-Body Medicine Study Group. The deaths of one of those friends and my father led me down a spiritual rabbit hole into the world of dreams and shamanic journeying, including a healing encounter with my first power animal, the jaguar. Led by these unusual forms of guidance I co-founded the Duke Center for Integrative Medicine in 1998, became the education director and took the UCLA Acupuncture Course for Physicians. I left full-time radiology and began to practice acupuncture along with hypnosis and dream work at a variety of clinics at Duke.

Q: So did the work culminate at Duke?

A: No, the journey continued. A fortunate twist in the story occurred in 2002 when I was introduced to EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), the perfect combination of my hypnosis and acupuncture training. Through a series of magical synchronicities in 2004 I was guided to leave Duke to set up Healing Imager, PC, to offer consulting services in MRI musculoskeletal radiology for NATIONALRad and in EFT and hypnosis for Oriental Health Solutions, LLC. I became a certified energy health practitioner through the Association for Comprehensive Energy Psychology in 2010 and was certified in hypnosis by the American Society of Clinical Hypnosis in 2011.

Q: OK, and then?

A: After telling stories about all these healing adventures for many years, I was finally inspired to publish *Let Magic Happen: Adventures in Healing with a Holistic Radiologist* in 2012. Along the way the journey has continued to unfold in mysterious ways. I've explored my own various musculoskeletal ailments through the lens of symptoms as metaphors and have gained valuable insights that I enjoy sharing with patients in my practice as well as with healthcare practitioners through workshops. Dreamwork has also expanded as a focus inspiring me to do a research project on women who have warning dreams about their breast cancers before diagnosis.

Q: How about the Medical Intuitive component?

A: Along the way I had interaction with Caroline Myss. My initial experience occurred on a day when I had just made an MRI diagnosis of a malignant sacral tumor growing into the spine in a young girl in my practice as described in the opening story of Chapter 5 of *Let Magic Happen: Adventures in Healing with a Holistic Radiologist*. Prior to writing the book, I also published the story in a Psychic/Intuitive Diagnosis article in the *Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*. I happened to have met Caroline a few weeks before at the Association for Research and Enlightenment in Virginia Beach. We had discussed the possibility of doing research on this topic, and she returned my follow-up phone call that afternoon. After initial hesitation, she graciously agreed to demonstrate her abilities on this case as described in the excerpt below.

Diagnosis from a Distance excerpt:

Caroline wanted just the name and age of the patient without any other information about the scan or the girl's symptoms. I made sure there were no clues that would tip her off to the diagnosis. There were five seconds of silence, and then she said, "There is a tumor in the pelvis working its way into the spine." In basketball terms, Caroline had made a "slam dunk." I was stunned, but managed to ask her to tell me more. "This is an immature girl who has a fear of going through puberty," she said, and I responded that it might just be an infection. But she said, "No. It is a malignant condition." Her words came with a sense of knowing and certainty.

After another couple of seconds, she continued. "There is a severe imbalance of the second energy center, or chakra, due to her genetic background, her family history, and her current relationship issues." I asked her how she got this information. She said I had given her the "spiritual signature" of the patient, and she tuned in to Jessica through me. At first, I thought she was just reading my mind, which would have been impressive enough, but she clearly had access to more information than I did. My mind was reeling from the shock to my belief system as I struggled to fit her abilities into a box I was familiar with.

Sure enough, the biopsy a few days later revealed a malignant sarcoma. It had a relatively poor prognosis. Jessica got chemotherapy followed by radiation to the pelvis, which would likely affect the ovaries and her ability to have a normal puberty. When I left for North Carolina one year later, Jessica was still alive, and I have no further follow up. I was left to ponder the fact we had charged \$2,000 for the two-hour MRI diagnosis that Caroline had made remotely in about two minutes. The idea of doing research to validate what I had just experienced became something of an obsession for me. Caroline is very

much in demand so we were not able to work together much after she made me a believer.

Q: Your work with Medical Intuitives started there, correct?

A: Yes, I sought out and put to the test many people who claimed to be medical intuitives but none were up to the standards I required. Then, Winter Robinson was giving a seminar one afternoon at Duke and I attended and was impressed after we talked. A few months later I called her with a difficult case. She saw things that I had not guessed at and turned out to be true. Over the years I have called her with different cases and her quality of insights are rare in my experience. We have talked of doing a class together for a long time. Recently, Nancy McMoneagle gave us the green light.



Q: So what will *Medical Intuition and Symbolic Diseases* be about?

A: Winter will be focusing on how people can learn to discover ailments in others and apply healing techniques. My main interest is in how people can examine their own bodies and discover the causes of their ill health, then work to rectify them. I will also be teaching the EFT (Emotional Freedom Techniques), which I feel is a simple and effective way for people to work on their personal healing. Winter and I had enough material to teach for a few weeks of programs but we decided for the program to hold it to these areas and the areas that the participants most need. We are both excited about offering this weekend workshop and what people will get out of it.

Q: What is it, “for people to work on their personal healing?”

A: Or you might ask, what does invisible disease mean? New Zealand clinical immunologist-turned-psychiatrist Brian Broom estimates that 25% of the patients in his clinic have psychosomatic illnesses that manifest as frank somatic metaphors such as those described in his linked article “A Reappraisal of the Role of ‘Mindbody’ Factors in Chronic Urticaria.” Using the titles of Dr. Broom’s two books, these Meaning-full Diseases are symbolic of The Patient’s Other Story in a way that is invisible to clinicians in Western medicine who are trained to think in a linear fashion. Acupuncture practitioners who use Chinese five-element theory are more likely to be willing to explore a non-linear approach to symptoms.

After reading Dr. Broom’s work, I wondered whether the most acute and life-threatening form of immune disease, anaphylaxis, might also have a symbolic component that could be addressed with EFT. One of my EFT weight loss patients mentioned that he had a rare allergy to tomatoes causing him to turn red and swollen in the face like a tomato with severe respiratory distress leading to shock. It required carrying an emergency Epi Pen. He revealed being bullied as a teenager in the school cafeteria by boys who threw tomato sauce on him, splattering his clothes like blood. After much tapping, he went to a party and ate cocktail sauce for the first time in years, which freaked out his friends, but caused no symptoms.

Dr. Broom also observes that symbolic diseases are essentially “invisible diseases” to most conventionally trained physicians. This was the case for a recent client of mine, a psychotherapist who had experienced multiple episodes of pneumonia and sinusitis since the death of her husband nine months earlier. Several courses of antibiotics failed to resolve her sinus condition, so she was scheduled for sinus surgery. Our first tapping session focused on unresolved grief, and her sinuses began to clear. She called the surgeon, who couldn’t see the symbolic disease, to cancel. After a couple more EFT sessions she was better. This is the sort of information I plan to share and explore with people in our program.

Q: Thank you Dr. Burk this was great.

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